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Mr. Matthew Tucker
Director
Department of Rail and Public Transportation
1313 East Main Street
Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Proposed Roanoke Regional Intermodal Facility Site Studies

Dear Mr. Tucker,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the March 19, 2008 letter from the City of Salem to DRPT about the proposed Colorado St. intermodal facility site. We appreciate the City of Salem's desire to work with NS and DRPT to locate the facility in the Roanoke region. Their willingness to close the Union Street crossing, change the quiet zone status, and assist in assembling the required 60 acres, is helpful but, unfortunately, does not address the operational issues of the Colorado St. site.

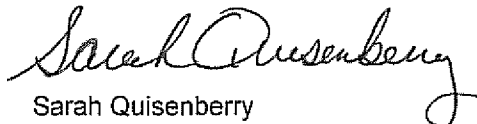
The Colorado site, located on the V-Line, will cause major disruption and significant time delays to all rail traffic operating through Roanoke. This site will require rerouting the intermodal traffic from the N-Line to the V-Line then back to the N-Line. Eastbound coal traffic and all other rail traffic on the V-Line will have to be halted for over an hour while an intermodal train is utilizing the V-Line to switch the intermodal facility located at Colorado St. It will be very difficult and uneconomical to build a bypass track around the facility to avoid blocking traffic on the V-Line while an intermodal train switches the Colorado site due to:

- Existing development east of the site,
- The V-Line and N-Line diverging east of the site,
- The difference in elevation between the V-Line and N-Line east of the site, and
- Construction of new rail bridges over the Roanoke River and Mason Creek, which would significantly increase the project cost.

Coal traffic moving from Virginia and West Virginia mines to market moves through Roanoke. Recent changes in the global market, from the value of the US dollar to consumption by China of coal and steel, have resulted in increased demand for US coal. Hampton Roads is the nation's largest coal port. Coal shipments through Hampton Roads are projected to increase 48% in 2008, from 28.3 million tons per year to 42 million tons. We expect coal traffic to increase on the NS system. This increased coal traffic will be even more incompatible with the establishment of an intermodal facility at Colorado St. than what was reviewed last year. The costs of establishing an intermodal facility at Colorado St are much greater than simply the construction of the facility because railroading is a network business.

NS continues to believe that the Elliston site is the only site which meets all DRPT criteria and supports NS requirements for operational efficiency, safety, service, and economy.

Respectfully yours,



Sarah Quisenberry